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Mosquito Reduction Efforts Begin in Fairfax County

The Fairfax County Health Department and their contractor, Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management, have begun the first phase of the county mosquito management program which is to treat standing water sites where mosquitoes breed. Storm drain inlets throughout the county will be treated during May with an environmentally friendly larvicide that will dissolve in the water trapped in storm sewers. The larvicide prevents the mosquito larvae from developing into adult mosquitoes and is effective for up to six weeks.

County health officials are trying to suppress the mosquito population throughout the season by using early intervention and a proactive approach to mosquito control. The principle is quite simple -stop the breeding cycle early in the season and fewer mosquitoes will be available to spread diseases like West Nile virus from birds to people.

Data collected from mosquito and dead bird surveillance over the past several years have identified geographic areas of the county that appear to be at higher risk for large numbers of mosquitoes. Generally, high risk areas are densely populated and have older homes and infrastructures resulting in a higher probability for standing water which becomes mosquito breeding sites. The greatest risk areas will be treated early in the season so that the entire target area of Fairfax County (up to 80,000 storm drain inlets) can be treated by the Memorial Day weekend.

Personnel began treatment in the eastern part of the county and will move to the western portions. During the mosquito season Fairfax County residents may see vehicles bearing a Clarke Mosquito Control sign and a flashing light traveling throughout the county.

In addition to the larviciding of the storm drain inlets, additional inspections of mosquito breeding sites have begun and similar larviciding treatment will be implemented. Fairfax County entomologist Jorge Arias, Ph.D., has begun conducting mosquito surveillance and will use the information he collects to refine and direct the county's mosquito control effort.

As county residents enjoy the spring days, county health officials remind everyone to Fight the

Bite - Say NO to MOSquitoes - Eliminate Standing Water. For more information call the Health Department at 703-246-2300, TTY 711 (Virginia Relay Center).